

Services Questionnaire, and when applicable, the Standard Form 255 (SF 255), *Architect-Engineer and Related Services Questionnaire for Specific Project*.

(c) *Data files and the classification of firms.* Under the direction of the parent agency, offices or permanent evaluation boards shall maintain an architect-engineer qualifications data file. These offices or boards shall review the SF's 254 and 255 filed, and shall classify each firm with respect to:

- (1) Location;
- (2) Specialized experience;
- (3) Professional capabilities; and
- (4) Capacity, with respect to the scope of work that can be undertaken. A firm's ability and experience in computer-assisted design should be considered, when appropriate.

(d) *Currency of files.* Any office or board maintaining qualifications data files shall review and update each file at least once a year. This process should include:

- (1) Encouraging firms to submit annually an updated statement of qualifications and performance data on a SF 254.
 - (2) Reviewing the SF's 254 and 255 and, if necessary, updating the firm's classification (see 36.603(c)).
 - (3) Recording any contract awards made to the firm in the past year.
 - (4) Assuring that the file contains a copy of each pertinent performance report (see 36.604).
 - (5) Discarding any material that has not been updated within the past three years, if it is no longer pertinent, see 36.604(c).
 - (6) Posting the date of the review in the file.
- (e) *Use of data files.* Evaluation boards and other appropriate Government employees, including contracting officers, shall use data files on firms.

36.604 Performance evaluation.

(a) *Preparation of performance reports.* For each contract of more than \$25,000, performance evaluation reports shall be prepared by the cognizant contracting activity, using the SF 1421, Performance Evaluation (Architect-Engineer). Performance evaluation reports may also be prepared for contracts of \$25,000 or less.

(1) A report shall be prepared after final acceptance of the architect and engineer contract work or after contract termination. Ordinarily, the evaluating official who prepares this report should be the person responsible for monitoring contract performance.

(2) A report may also be prepared after completion of the actual construction of the project.

(3) In addition to the reports in subparagraphs (a)(1) and (2) of this section, interim reports may be prepared at any time.

(4) If the evaluating official concludes that a contractor's overall performance was unsatisfactory, the contractor shall be advised in writing that a report of unsatisfactory performance is being prepared and the basis for the report. If the contractor submits any written comments, the evaluating official shall include them in the report, resolve any alleged factual discrepancies, and make appropriate changes in the report.

(5) The head of the contracting activity shall establish procedures which ensure that fully qualified personnel prepare and review performance reports.

(b) *Review of performance reports.* Each performance report shall be reviewed to ensure that it is accurate and fair. The reviewing official should have knowledge of the contractor's performance and should normally be at an organizational level above that of the evaluating official.

(c) *Distribution and use of performance reports.* Each performance report shall be distributed in accordance with agency procedures. The report shall be included in the contract file, and copies shall be sent to offices or boards for filing with the firm's qualifications data (see 36.603(d)(4)). The contracting activity shall retain the report for at least six years after the date of the report.

[48 FR 42356, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 56 FR 15153, Apr. 15, 1991]

36.605 Government cost estimate for architect-engineer work.

(a) An independent Government estimate of the cost of architect-engineer services shall be prepared and furnished to the contracting officer before

commencing negotiations for each proposed contract or contract modification expected to exceed \$100,000. The estimate shall be prepared on the basis of a detailed analysis of the required work as though the Government were submitting a proposal.

(b) Access to information concerning the Government estimate shall be limited to Government personnel whose official duties require knowledge of the estimate. An exception to this rule may be made during contract negotiations to allow the contracting officer to identify a specialized task and disclose the associated cost breakdown figures in the Government estimate, but only to the extent deemed necessary to arrive at a fair and reasonable price. The overall amount of the Government's estimate shall not be disclosed except as permitted by agency regulations.

[48 FR 42356, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 62 FR 44829, Aug. 22, 1997]

36.606 Negotiations.

(a) Unless otherwise specified by the selection authority, the final selection authorizes the contracting officer to begin negotiations. Negotiations shall be conducted in accordance with part 15 of this chapter, beginning with the most preferred firm in the final selection (see 15.404-4(c)(4)(i) on fee limitation and the determination and findings requirement at 16.306(c)(2) for a cost-plus-fixed-fee contract).

(b) The contracting officer should ordinarily request a proposal from the firm, ensuring that the solicitation does not inadvertently preclude the firm from proposing the use of modern design methods.

(c) The contracting officer shall inform the firm that no construction contract may be awarded to the firm that designed the project, except as provided in 36.209.

(d) During negotiations, the contracting officer should seek advance agreement (see 31.109) on any charges for computer-assisted design. When the firm's proposal does not cover appropriate modern and cost-effective design methods (e.g., computer-assisted design), the contracting officer should discuss this topic with the firm.

(e) Because selection of firms is based upon qualifications, the extent of any subcontracting is an important negotiation topic. The clause prescribed at 44.204(b), Subcontractors and Outside Associates and Consultants (Architect-Engineer Services) (see 52.244-4), limits a firm's subcontracting to firms agreed upon during negotiations.

(f) If a mutually satisfactory contract cannot be negotiated, the contracting officer shall obtain a written best and final offer from the firm, and notify the firm that negotiations have been terminated. The contracting officer shall then initiate negotiations with the next firm on the final selection list. This procedure shall be continued until a mutually satisfactory contract has been negotiated. If negotiations fail with all selected firms, the contracting officer shall refer the matter to the selection authority who, after consulting with the contracting officer as to why a contract cannot be negotiated, may direct the evaluation board to recommend additional firms in accordance with 36.602.

[48 FR 42356, Sept. 19, 1983, as amended at 60 FR 37777, July 21, 1995; 62 FR 51271, Sept. 30, 1997; 63 FR 34060, June 22, 1998]

36.607 Release of information on firm selection.

(a) After final selection has taken place, the contracting officer may release information identifying only the architect-engineer firm with which a contract will be negotiated for certain work. The work should be described in any release only in general terms, unless information relating to the work is classified. If negotiations are terminated without awarding a contract to the highest rated firm, the contracting officer may release that information and state that negotiations will be undertaken with another (named) architect-engineer firm. When an award has been made, the contracting officer may release award information, (see 5.401).

(b) Debriefings of successful and unsuccessful firms will be held after final selection has taken place and will be conducted, to the extent practicable, in accordance with 15.503, 15.506(b) through (f), 15.507(c). Note that